In the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended)   A method for at least semi-automatically directly negotiating a relationship between at least a first user party and a second user party without an intermediary, the steps of the method being performed by a data processor, the method comprising the steps of:

(a)   providing a first intention for the first user party and a second intention for the second user party, each of said first intention and said second intention featuring a plurality of components;

(b)   exchanging at least one dispatch between the first user party and the second user party, said at least one dispatch including a reference to a value for at least one of said plurality of components;

(c)   generating a merged portion according to said reference to said value in said at least one dispatch, said generating comprising merging at least a portion of said first user intention and at least a portion of said second user intention;

(e̶d)   altering at least one of said first intention for the first user party and said second intention for the second user party with said a̶c̶c̶o̶r̶d̶i̶n̶g̶ ̶t̶o̶ ̶s̶a̶i̶d̶ ̶r̶e̶f̶e̶r̶e̶n̶c̶e̶ ̶t̶o̶ ̶s̶a̶i̶d̶ ̶v̶a̶l̶u̶e̶ ̶i̶n̶ ̶s̶a̶i̶d̶ ̶a̶t̶ ̶l̶e̶a̶s̶t̶ ̶o̶n̶e̶ ̶d̶i̶s̶p̶a̶t̶c̶h̶,̶ ̶s̶a̶i̶d̶ ̶a̶l̶t̶e̶r̶i̶n̶g̶ ̶c̶o̶m̶p̶r̶i̶s̶i̶n̶g̶ ̶m̶e̶r̶g̶i̶n̶g̶ ̶a̶t̶ ̶l̶e̶a̶s̶t̶ ̶a̶ ̶p̶o̶r̶t̶i̶o̶n̶ ̶o̶f̶ ̶s̶a̶i̶d̶ ̶f̶i̶r̶s̶t̶ ̶u̶s̶e̶r̶ ̶i̶n̶t̶e̶n̶t̶i̶o̶n̶ ̶a̶n̶d̶ ̶a̶t̶ ̶l̶e̶a̶s̶t̶ ̶a̶ ̶p̶o̶r̶t̶i̶o̶n̶ ̶o̶f̶ ̶s̶a̶i̶d̶ ̶s̶e̶c̶o̶n̶d̶ ̶u̶s̶e̶r̶ ̶i̶n̶t̶e̶n̶t̶i̶o̶n̶ ̶t̶o̶ ̶f̶o̶r̶m̶ ̶a̶ merged u̶s̶e̶r̶ ̶i̶n̶t̶e̶n̶t̶i̶o̶n̶portion;

(d̶e)   comparing said first user intention to said second user intention; and

(e̶f)   if said first user intention matches said second user intention, determining the relationship according to said merged u̶s̶e̶r̶ ̶i̶n̶t̶e̶n̶t̶i̶o̶n̶portion.

2. (Original)   The method of claim 1, wherein said reference to said value is selected from the group consisting of a variable component, an actual value, a request for a value from said second party, and a request to select a value from a set of values for said second party.

3. (Original)   The method of claim 1, wherein said reference to said value is determined by a compiled goal program which encodes constraints, preferences and negotiation parameters of said first or said second intentions.

4. (Original)   The method of claim 3, wherein said compiled goal program is used to create at least one procedure selected from the group consisting of

(i)   suggest a tuple of values;

(ii)   choose from a number of alternative tuples of values;

(iii) rank tuples of values according to a desirability; and

(iv)   *suggest* an improvement to an input tuple of values;

5. (Original)   The method of claim 1, wherein said step of negotiating said relationship between said at least said first party and said second party is effected, at least in part, using a structure selected from the group consisting of one-to-one with or without revealing and one-to-many without revealing.

6. (Original)   The method of claim 3, wherein at least two goal programs are combined to form a combined goal program, which encodes said constraints, said preferences and said negotiation parameters of at least said first or said second intentions.

7. (Original)   The method of claim 2, wherein said variable component is associated with a predefined default interval.

8. (Original)   The method of claim 7, wherein said default interval is associated with at least one value, at least one range of values or a combination of at least one value and at least one range of values.

9. (Currently amended)   The method of claim 1, wherein step (c) is performed by merging at least a portion of said first intention and at least a portion of said second intention to form a merged ~~intention~~portion, such that the relationship is defined according to said merged ~~intention~~portion.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein only a portion of said first intention and only a portion of said second intention are merged to form the relationship.

11. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein an entirety of said first intention and an entirety of said second intention are merged to form the relationship.

12. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein said first intention and said second intention are incomplete, such that step (b) further comprises the steps of:

(i)   defining at least one computational device for adding at least one suggested component to at least one intention;

(ii)   executing said at least one computational device to obtain said suggested component; and

(iii)   sending a message from the first party to the second party, said message including a suggested component according to said at least one computational device.

13. (Currently amended)   The method of claim 12, wherein said dispatch of step (b) also includes said first intention of said first party and is sent from said first party to said second party, such that said second party adds said suggested component to said merged ~~intention~~portion. |

14. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein step (b) further comprises the step of:

(iv)determining by said second party whether to accept said suggested component.

15. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein step (b) further comprises the step of:

(iv)   providing a value for said suggested component by said second party.

16. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein said first intention and said second intention are incomplete, such that step (b) further comprises the steps of:

(i)   defining at least one computational device at the second party for adding at least one suggested component to at least one intention;

(ii)   executing said at least one computational device to obtain said suggested component; and

(iii) sending a message from the second party to the first party, said message including a suggested component according to said at least one computational device.

17. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein step (b) further comprises the step of:

(i) providing a value for at least one component by said second party.

18. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said component also includes a constraint for restricting said value.

19. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein said constraint determines that said value is not alterable.

20. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein said constraint determines that said value is alterable, such that step (b) further comprises the step of sending a return message with a counter offer for altering said value of said at least one variable by at least one of the first party and the second party.

21. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein step (c) further comprises the step of removing at least one constraint from at least one component.

22. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein step (e̶d̲) further comprises the step of saving a state of each of said first intention and said second intention to form a previous state, before altering said first intention and said second intention, the method further comprising the step of:

(f̶g̲) if said first intention does not match said second intention, returning said first intention and said second intention to said previous state.

23. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, the method further comprising the step of:

(f̶g̲) if said first intention matches said second intention, notifying each party of acceptance of the relationship.

24. (Currently amended)   The method of claim 1, wherein said first intention and said second intention are each constructed as a first intention tree and a second intention tree, respectively, such that step (de) is performed by comparing said first tree to said second tree.

25. (Original) The method of claim 24, wherein step (c) is performed by merging at least a portion of said first tree and at least a portion of said second tree to form a merged tree, such that the relationship is defined according to said merged tree.

26. (Original) The method of claim 25, wherein only a portion of said first tree and only a portion of said second tree are merged to form the relationship.

27. (Original) The method of claim 25, wherein an entirety of said first tree and an entirety of said second tree are merged to form the relationship.

28. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein each component is constructed from a set of shared classes for the first party and the second party.

29. (Currently amended)   The method of claim 1, wherein the relationship is determined as a contract, said contract featuring a plurality of intentions, such that steps (a)-(ef) are performed for each of said plurality of intentions.

30. (Currently Amended)   A system for at least semi-automatically directly negotiating a relationship between a plurality of user parties in respect of components taking a value, said negotiating being without an intermediary, the system comprising:
(a)   a plurality of user party modules, including at least a first user party module and a second user party module, each user party module featuring a user intention for determining the relationship, said user intentions respectively featuring a plurality of components in common to be determined for the relationship and respective values, such that a process of negotiation by at least one of said first and second user party modules matches said user intention of said first user party module to said user

intention of said second user party module to provide a value agreed between users for said plurality of components; and

(b)   a central server configured for at least initially connecting at least said first user party module to at least said second user party module for performing said direct negotiations to reach said agreed value, said negotiating comprising generating a common user intention by merging of said respective user party intentions.

31. (Original) The system of claim 30, wherein at least said first party module features a plurality of intentions for negotiating with a plurality of parties.

32. (Original) The system of claim 31, wherein said central server further comprises a server party module for performing said negotiations on behalf of at least one party.

33. (Original) The system of claim 32, wherein only said server party module performs said negotiations on behalf of a plurality of parties.

34. (Original) The system of claim 31, wherein said central server further comprises a server party module for performing said negotiations on behalf of said central server as a broker.

35. (Original) The system of claim 31, wherein said party modules perform said negotiations and said central server only initially connects said first party module to said second party module.

36. (Original) The system of claim 31, wherein at least one party module features at least one computational device for generating a suggested alteration to said intention according to at least one rule, such that if said first intention does not match said second intention, said suggested alteration is generated by said at least one computational device.

37. (Original) The system of claim 36, wherein at least one party module further features at least one computational device for determining if said suggested alteration is accepted.

38.(Previously presented) A method for at least semi-automatically directly negotiating a relationship between at least a first user party and a second user party, the relationship relating to components, the negotiating being without an intermediary, the method being performed by a data processor, the method comprising:

(a) providing a first intention for the first user party and a second intention for the second user party, each of said first intention and said second intention featuring a plurality of components;

(b) providing at least one computational device, said computational device being configured for defining an additional component for at least the first user party;

(c) comparing said first intention to said second intention;

(d) if said first intention is different than said second intention, defining said additional component using said at least one computational device by the first party;

(e) sending at least one message from the first party to the second party, said at least one message including said additional component;

(f) determining if said additional component is accepted by the second party;

(g) if said additional component is accepted by the second party, adding said additional component to said first intention for the first party and to said second intention for the second party;

(h) repeating step (c) at least once; and

(i) if said first intention matches said second intention, then merging the respective first and second intentions to form a common user intention, and determining the relationship according to said common user intention.

39. (Original) The method of claim 38, wherein steps (d) to (i) are repeated at least once.

40.(Previously presented) For use in a system for at least semi-automatically directly negotiating a relationship between a first user party and a second user party, each of the first user party and the second user party having a first user intention and a second user intention, respectively, such that the relationship is negotiated by matching the first user intention and the second user intention, a device

operated by at least one of the first user party and the second user party, the device comprising:

(a) an intention data structure configured for holding an intention;

(b) a negotiation control program configured for controlling a process of negotiation between said users; and

(c) a unifier, associated with said negotiation control program, configured to unify said user intentions via said intention data structure via said process of negotiation between users to form a merged user intention within said data structure, said merged user intention unifying said respective first and second intentions, therefrom to define the relationship.

41.(Original) The device of claim 40, wherein said intention data structure includes at least one constraint, the device further comprising:

(d) a constraint solver for solving said at least one constraint.

42.(Previously presented) A method of creating a minimizing goal for a level within a goal program, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) providing a goal program having a plurality of levels, at least some of said levels comprising constraints;

(b) identifying constraints within a respective level;

(c) normalizing each of said identified constraints so as to obtain normalized constraints; and

(d) combining said normalized constraints to created said minimized goal for said level.